



FEMA

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Disaster News

FOUR ADDITIONAL COUNTIES DESIGNATED FOR INDIVIDUAL ASSISTANCE

East Lansing, MI – Disaster assistance for Eaton, Muskegon, Saginaw and Washtenaw Counties has been made available to help homeowners, renters and business owners recover from the effects of the severe weather that occurred from May 20-24, disaster recovery officials announced today.

Marianne C. Jackson, Federal Coordinating Officer for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) said the additional assistance was approved based on a review of damage data gathered by federal and state disaster recovery personnel. The four counties were added by amendment to the major disaster declaration issued by President Bush on June 30.

“We remain committed to delivering assistance wherever it’s needed and to making sure that every qualified individual, family and business receives the help needed to get back on the road to recovery,” Jackson said.

Affected residents and business owners in the four additional counties, along with those in the originally declared 19 counties, may apply for assistance by calling the toll-free application number, **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**, between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday - Saturday until further notice. Those who are speech or hearing impaired may call **TTY 1-800-462-7585**.

Jackson said calling these numbers is the only way to apply for a wide range of state and federal disaster assistance programs that can include: funding for temporary disaster housing assistance; U. S. Small Business Administration (SBA) low-interest loans for individuals and business owners to repair or replace real or personal property and housing repair; replacement grants to help meet serious disaster-related needs and expenses not covered by insurance or other assistance programs; and disaster unemployment assistance.

Government disaster assistance covers basic needs only and will not normally compensate people for their entire loss. If you have insurance, the government may help pay for basic needs not covered under your insurance policy. Residents should contact their insurance agent first; then, if they have unmet needs, they should call FEMA to apply. Some disaster aid does not have to be paid back, while other forms of help may come in the form of loans. The FEMA representative will explain the details to you when you call.

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When calling to apply for assistance, people are advised to have the following information available to help speed up the application process:

- Your current phone number
- Your Social Security number, if available
- A general list of damages and losses you suffered
- If insured, your insurance policy number, or the agent's and company name
- General financial information
- Your bank account code if you wish to speed up your assistance with direct deposit

With today's amendment, the 23 disaster-designated counties include: Barry, Berrien, Cass, Eaton, Genesee, Gladwin, Ingham, Ionia, Jackson, Kent, Livingston, Macomb, Mecosta, Muskegon, Oakland, Ottawa, Saginaw, Sanilac, Shiawassee, St. Clair, St. Joseph, Washtenaw and Wayne.

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On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

